



Terry Husseman
Outstanding
Waste Reduction & Recycling in
Public Schools Awards Program

Annual Overview for 2000-2001 Cycle

Washington State Department of Ecology
Solid Waste & Financial Assistance Program

Publication #01-07-020
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Overview

This 12-year-old award recognizes waste-reduction and recycling excellence among elementary, junior and senior high schools. Two awards of \$2,500 and 9 of \$1,000 were given out. Schools are encouraged to use the money to improve school waste-reduction and recycling programs. Renamed "Terry Husseman" awards posthumously for Terry's championing of the awards and the cause.

All of Washington's 1,700 public schools received applications to apply for the Terry Husseman Outstanding Waste Reduction and Recycling in Public Schools Awards. The annual awards program was established by the Legislature in 1989 as part of the Waste Not Washington Act, and is administered by Ecology's Solid Waste and Financial Assistance Program. A total of 132 cash awards have been received by Washington schools over the past eleven years.

On May 4, 2001, at a ceremony in the St. Martin's Worthington Center, Ecology Director Tom Fitzimmons welcomed and congratulated the award recipients. Ecology Manager Cullen Stephenson presented \$13,000 in cash awards to 11 schools. Each winning school was judged on the basis of comprehensive, efficient, and innovative approaches to waste reduction and recycling during the 1998-99 school year. The 2000 ceremony was attended by 100 school children.

Several of this year's winning schools had also won awards in past years. They continue to build on previous accomplishments and win new recognition, this time for improving their award winning programs.

Award winning schools carry out active waste reduction and recycling programs during the school year. Each school also has an education component to support their waste reduction and recycling goals, often based on Ecology's waste management teacher training and curriculum package, "A-Way with Waste." In varying numbers, each school recycles aluminum and other metals, glass, cardboard and mixed paper, white paper, newsprint, food wastes, and plastic. The schools also practice many classroom and office waste reduction techniques, such as making two-sided copies, purchasing recycled products, reuse of surplus items, etc. Some of the additional innovative activities include:

- creative art projects using materials that are typically recycled or thrown-away;
- using glass and plastic containers for everything from sorting supplies to conducting hydroponic experiments;
- parting-out or striping discarded computers of useable materials then using the materials to rebuild existing computers; and
- developing a model program for other schools to follow.

Many schools practice environmental stewardship with school-based beautification projects. School recycling programs often extend into the local communities. In several cases the school program is the largest recycling effort the community has, and the reason why local citizens, businesses, and tribes are staying involved in the recycling effort.

Outstanding Waste-Reduction and Recycling Program

The first category is for Outstanding Waste-Reduction and Recycling Program. Our judges' criteria when scoring this category included: how the school reduces its waste before recycling, how efficient and creative the recycling program is, how the school includes or services the community, and the educational element in the program. Each of this year's two winners will receive \$2,500:

Mount Baker Junior/Senior High: Mt. Baker Junior/Senior High serves as its district's master-composter. Children are responsible for sorting wastes into compost, recycle, or garbage bins. Material is picked up from the cafeteria and added to the compost pile, along with sawdust from the wood shop. The students help turn the compost pile using a tractor. The students gather data on weights and conditions then chart the data on their computers. An old cement truck was donated to the school recently for use in aerating their pile.

Toppenish Junior High School. Toppenish Junior High School in Yakima County operates the TOPP-RECYCLE program. The students, staff, and community work together on this. The students receive valuable work experience, while the community receives valuable service. Toppenish Junior High is bridging the gap between public education and local businesses. Students at Toppenish are truly special and this program provides them with opportunities that result in positive behaviors and life choices.

Best Waste Reduction Program

The second category is for Best Waste-Reduction Program. The criteria our judges looked for in this category included how the school reduces its waste before recycling, how efficient and creative the waste-reduction methods are, and the extent of the educational element in the program. This year's winners will receive \$1,000:

Trout Lake School is located in Klickitat County. Their waste-reduction program is in many ways more of a philosophy than an official program. The students and staff are conscious that there are more and less wasteful ways to operate a school, and they aim to increase the less wasteful ways. School employees and students try to reuse items whenever possible, repair items rather than throwing them out, use less-toxic cleaners and other chemicals, and avoid buying unnecessary materials. In addition, they have a worm-composting program, which has been in operation for seven years, and use it to reduce the food waste from school lunches and staff coffee-machine operation.

Wilson Creek High School in Grant County has been practicing waste-reduction and recycling methods for more than 19 years and it shows. The students created a mission statement, wrote a policy, and set goals. They are developing a comprehensive, model waste-reduction program that will include innovative strategies for transportation and waste management. When complete, the model will be available for use by other schools around Washington. Wilson Creek strives to set an example for other major organizations in their county. We certainly hope that others follow such a well-organized leader!

Acme, in the Mt. Baker School District, has been dedicated to waste reduction and reuse for nine years. The students are constantly trying to improve their program. This past year, they worked with the Department of Ecology's toxics-reduction specialists to improve the management of toxins at their print shop and in the chemistry lab. Students at Acme are eager to apply waste-reduction techniques. With past award monies, Acme has purchased items to help run, educate others about, and promote waste-reduction programs.

Eisenhower Middle School in Grant County has a school-wide waste-reduction program. Last fall, all toxic chemicals were removed from the science rooms and students learned safe classroom chemical use. A chemical expert assisted the students with this. They even make waste-reduction and recycling technique presentations to fellow students. The school uses a worm bin for composting coffee grounds, kitchen scraps and shredded paper. Castings from the schools worm bin are used during the student plant-growing unit in science class.

Best Recycling Program

The third, and last, category is for Best Recycling Program. The criteria our judges looked for in this category included the amount of material recycled by the school, the number of different materials recycled and the rate of the amount recycled in relationship to the school's population. This year's winners will each receive \$1,000.

Chelan Middle/High School has been practicing recycling for nine years now. Each year, they have become more committed, more enthusiastic, and more efficient in recycling and waste management. All of the teachers and students participate in the recycling efforts. Chelan Middle/High School's recycling program has faced many challenges related to funding and policy support. It emerged from these battles with a highly efficient recycling process that has become a ritual for the entire school.

Mill A Elementary and Junior High is proud of the educational component of its recycling program. Mill A students study the importance of recycling from the day they enter Kindergarten until graduation. Recycling becomes a way of life for them. Each year, a different environmental theme is targeted. This helps give students a deeper understanding of why preserving our earth and its resources is so important. This year they studied Native Americans, as well as our country's environmental needs. Individual responsibility is an important part of the entire educational program and is applied to recycling responsibilities too!

Sunnyside High has been operating its recycling program for more than five years. The program for the 1,160 high school students began with the support of only a few teachers and a small group of Future Farmers of America members. Now almost 90 percent of the students and teachers are involved in the program. The students educate the district and provide two recycling drop-points for a community of 17,000 people. Over the years, 235 natural resource students and FFA members have experienced first hand the citizenship and responsibility that is needed to proliferate good, ecological habits.

Stratton Elementary takes great pride in the results of its recycling program. With more computers and printers in classrooms, the students are learning about the ink-cartridge-recycling program for which they receive purchasing points. They use brooms and air blowers instead of water during their spring grounds clean up. Numerous recycling and reuse ideas flow throughout the school, helping students develop and grow up with good habits. The efforts of the dedicated custodial staff play a large part in Stratton's continued success, as well. Despite budget cuts, Stratton's recycling program is strong and working in their school!

Capital High, in Olympia, actively participates in recycling ink-cartridges. But the students have dealt with more than just recycling. They have learned about following internal processes to achieve results. Capital High students have banded together to work through obstacles ranging from local politics to poor student-media coverage, and were able to re-establish their recycling program and improve upon it. With support from administrators and responsible students, they have had success. They hope to take their award money and run ads in the local paper encouraging ink-cartridge recycling.

Ecology Department rewards schools for recycling

OLYMPIA -- Students from 11 schools from across the state received awards today from the state Department of Ecology in a ceremony that celebrated their exceptional recycling efforts.

The Terry Husseman Outstanding Waste Reduction & Recycling Public School Awards were presented this morning at the Worthington Center at St. Martin's College in Lacey. Award amounts range from \$1,000 to \$2,500.

The award-winning public schools were recognized for their efforts to educate students about waste-prevention, waste-reduction and recycling programs, as well as for actively carrying out the programs. The award categories are best waste reduction, best recycling, and outstanding waste reduction & recycling.

"The commitment evident in these students and their schools makes us proud," said Cullen Stephenson, manager of Ecology's solid-waste program. "Their dedication to Washington's health, beauty and future is obvious in the focus they put on recycling, reusing materials and avoiding waste generation."

The winners for the 2000-2001 school year are:

Best waste reduction (\$1,000 to each school)

Acme Elementary, Whatcom County
Eisenhower Middle School, Snohomish County
Trout Lake School, Klickitat County
Wilson Creek Junior/Senior, Grant County

Best recycling (\$1,000 to each school)

Capital High, Thurston County
Chelan Middle/High School, Chelan County
Mill A School, Skamania County
Stratton Elementary, Pend Oreille County
Sunnyside High School, Yakima County

Outstanding waste reduction & recycling (\$2,500 to each school)

Mt Baker Junior/Senior, Whatcom County
Toppenish Middle School, Yakima County
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Photo Album



Capital High School



Eisenhower Middle School



Mill A School



Toppenish Middle School



Stratton Elementary



Sunnyside High School

Ceremony Speech, Tom Fitzimmons

Hello everyone! I am very excited to be here with all of you to honor the waste-reduction and recycling programs in your schools.

The Department of Ecology has a lot of pride in this award program.

The man that the awards are named after, Terry Husseman, was the deputy director of the Department of Ecology for many years. He understood better than just about anyone the importance of your waste-reduction and recycling efforts and the environmental education going on in your schools.

Unfortunately, Terry passed away a little over three years ago, and we miss him very much. I am very pleased that his wife, Marcia, is able to be here today to help thank you for your efforts and to honor Terry's legacy.

Marcia, would you please stand? Welcome and thank you for attending this award ceremony. (*lead applause in Marcia Husseman's honor*)

If Terry were here today, he would not only congratulate you and encourage you to continue with your current efforts, he would also ask that you think about sustainability ...

The word "sustainability" comes from the word "sustain," to keep in existence. What sustainability means is having an environment that works for you when you grow up. Using resources and natural materials such as water, wood, and metals wisely so that there will be plenty left for the future.

For too long, our society has not paid good attention to this, and now we are seeing real-life effects. For example, we are experiencing global warming due to a build-up of the wrong kinds of gasses in the atmosphere.

We find high levels of toxins are building up in whales that reside in Washington's waters.

Whales get these toxins from the fish they eat. We eat the same fish.

It is important to be aware of what we are doing -- and to use energy and materials wisely.

For instance, if you recycle an aluminum can, you save 95 percent of the energy used to create a new can!

By not littering, you are doing two good things: One, you are disposing of your waste properly, and two, someone else doesn't have to pick it up for you.

Some day, many of you will be grandparents. What is the world going to look like for your grandkids?

What you all are doing right now is so very important. Big changes are hard. That's why making changes while you are young can make all the difference. Being responsible and starting now will make sure your grandkids have a nice earth.

And we are all here today because you and your schools are leaders and are taking these steps.

Thank you for all your efforts.

Ceremony Speech, Cullen Stephenson

Hello everyone and welcome to the 13th annual school recycling awards ceremony. My name is Cullen Stephenson. I am the manager of the Department of Ecology's Solid Waste and Financial Assistance program. On behalf of Ecology, I would like to thank you all for being here this morning. I realize that some of you had to get up very early this morning to be here and we appreciate that very much. It's great to see so many of you!

We are here today to recognize excellence in waste reduction and recycling among elementary, junior and senior high schools. Each public school in the state was given an opportunity to compete for these awards. This year, the Department of Ecology will give out two awards of \$2,500 and nine awards of \$1,000 each. We encourage the schools that win these prizes to use the money to improve their waste-reduction and recycling programs.

As many of you are aware, recycling means separating materials from the waste stream and reprocessing them into new products. Waste reduction means avoiding waste generation in the first place, reducing the toxicity of materials, or reusing materials.

This year, 11 schools have been selected to receive Department of Ecology Waste Reduction and Recycling awards. The winning schools carry out active waste-reduction and recycling programs during the school year. Each school also has an educational program in place to support its waste-reduction and recycling goals. In varying degrees, each recycles aluminum and other metals, glass, cardboard, white paper, mixed paper, food wastes and plastic.

The schools also practice many classroom and office waste reduction techniques, such as making two-sided copies, purchasing recycled products to close the recycling loop, and reuse of various school supplies. Many schools practice environmental stewardship with school-based beautification projects and community outreach.

As students from each of the winning schools come forward, you will hear about their program and what led Ecology to single them out. When I call the name of your school, I would like your entire group to come up to receive your award. A photo will be taken of your group with Tom Fitzsimmons and me, then you may return to your seats.

Cullen described the school's program as they came up to the diaz and prepared for their photo opportunity.

That concludes our awards. The winning schools, as well as other schools that applied for these awards, are working for a better environment. They apply environmental stewardship to all of their studies and are learning by doing. As you have heard, many of them are taking their recycling programs into their communities. In a few cases, the school program is the largest or the only recycling program in the community. We are very pleased to be able to recognize these 11 schools today.

On behalf of the Department of Ecology, I thank you all for coming and encourage you to keep looking for more recycling and waste reduction opportunities. I also want to thank Tom Fitzsimmons for participating in this year's ceremony.

Let's have a final round of applause for the great environmental achievements of the schools we honored today.